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action acquiesced in by the nation at large, though opposed by the house of lords, as representing landed property, can only be explained by reference to the new political ideas which had grown up previous to the French revolution and which reached their fruition in the reform act of 1832, and the reforms of local government—the poor law in 1834 and the municipal corporations in 1835 which were the work of the first reformed parliament. It is as illustrating this great change in political ideals and theories that Mr. and Mrs. Webb's book makes the greatest contribution to political science.

A. G. PORRITT.

Stephen A. Douglas: A Study in American Politics. By ALLEN JOHNSON, Professor of History in Bowdoin College (New York: The Macmillan Company. 1908. Pp. 503.)

It is remarkable that Stephen A. Douglas should wait fifty years for an adequately appreciative biographer. Statesmen series have been published for the period preceding the civil war, but the one statesman whose personal contribution to the politics of the time equaled, if it did not excel, that of any other has been omitted from the list. Every detail in the life of Lincoln has been sought out and published. His life has been written and rewritten scores of times. By a crude, sentimental reading of history, such as has characterized special crises in ages of conflict, Lincoln has been made to embody and express all that is glorious in the saving of the Union and the emancipation of the slave. Luther personates the Reformation, Cromwell the Puritan revolution, Washington the founding of our republic, and Lincoln the second great national deliverance; and by the same unreasoning process Douglas, Lincoln's chief political rival, has incurred peculiar reprobation as representing the forces of opposition and hindrance to the policy of the nation's hero. It is, indeed, not to the sentimentalists alone that Douglas has been obnoxious. On account of his natural temperament and because of his transcendent ability as a special pleader, he has likewise fallen into disfavor with those endued with the modern scientific spirit.

Mr. Johnson's book, however, is not written to do justice to a man with whom fate has dealt unfairly. The work is based rather upon the conviction that the events in the life of Douglas are essential to the correct reading of the history of the period. With infinite pains and labor all available sources of information about the man Douglas are utilized to illuminate the history. To the extent of the author's ability

the real man is discovered and his actual relations to public affairs are set forth in clear and elegant English. There is not a touch of white-wash in the book, nor is there any special pleading. The scientific spirit is rigidly maintained under conditions exceedingly difficult.

The reviewer may be permitted to use the materials which the book supplies to do a thing which the author distinctly refrains from doing. He may indulge in a bit of special pleading on behalf of Douglas. Not so much, however, with the purpose of vindicating the man as of promoting a truer understanding of history.

The two rival statesmen of Illinois have been contrasted in the public mind in respect to their personal attitudes towards slavery, and the contrast has been drawn in strong colors. Yet, if we take simply the events of their lives to the date of the death of Douglas, there is really no marked contrast. On the contrary there are striking similarities in their positions respecting slavery issues. Lincoln and Douglas were alike opposed to the abolition agitation of the northern States. Both favored the execution of the fugitive slave law. When Seward put forth his famous doctrine of a higher moral law as justification for a disregard of the Constitution, Lincoln definitely repudiated the claim. Later, in the well known passage concerning a house divided against itself, he did indeed lead some to infer that he was ready to make war upon slavery. But, when called to an account by Douglas, he said he did not mean that the North was justified in making war upon slavery in the South. He had only uttered a prophecy, perhaps a foolish prophecy, as to what was likely to take place. Moreover, he was careful to state that the prediction would not be fulfilled for a hundred years or more.

Now, Douglas, eight years before this utterance of Lincoln, had himself prophesied on the slavery question. He knew vastly more about slavery than did Lincoln, since he was connected by marriage with a slaveholding family. He was also thoroughly informed respecting industrial conditions in all parts of the country. In his opinion slavery never could be extended to any part of the territory acquired by treaty with Mexico. He had, besides, explicitly stated in 1850 that he expected measures for gradual emancipation to be inaugurated in all the border slave states, including North Carolina and Tennessee. Though he fixed no date for this process to begin, the inference was clear that he expected it soon—in much less than a hundred years. As a prophet of evil to slavery, therefore, Douglas was, of the two, much the more radical and explicit.

As a republican leader it was to be expected that Lincoln would hold

to the view that under no conditions should any more slave States be admitted into the Union. Yet, when asked whether, in case the people of a territory, with full and free expression of opinion, should adopt a constitution providing for slavery, he would vote to exclude that territory, he refused to say that he would. So it appears that on this crucial question of party controversy Lincoln was nearer to agreement with Douglas than with the radicals of his own party.

Under the exigencies of debate Douglas declared that he did not care whether slavery was voted up or voted down. As he used the words they were probably intended to simply support his position that the people of the locality without dictation should settle that question for themselves. Lincoln used this expression to discredit Douglas in the eyes of the antislavery voters; yet, a few years later, and when not under any special pressure of debate, Lincoln as president of the Republic, avowed that if he could save the Union without liberating a single slave he would do it. If he could save the Union by liberating some and leaving the rest in slavery, he would do that. Or, if he could save the Union only by liberating all, he would liberate all. These words of Lincoln were also used to his discredit with the antislavery voters.

There is, of course, no thought of maintaining that the two statesmen held identical attitudes upon the slavery question; the effort is merely to call attention to the neglected fact that they agreed more than they differed. This, too, is helpful to a correct knowledge of the real Lincoln.

On the one great question of building up, strengthening and maintaining the Union the two Illinois leaders were indeed identical in spirit and purpose. No one could with any show of reason ever contend that Douglas had less devotion to the Union cause than had Lincoln. It was to save the Union rather than to gratify a personal ambition that Douglas conducted a personal campaign for the presidency in 1860. When, as a result of a State election during that campaign, it became evident that Lincoln would be the successful candidate, Douglas immediately planned an extended tour of the South in the interest of his rival, knowing at the time that his physical powers were already overtaxed and that he would incur serious risk of assassination. He counted not the cost to himself when the life of the nation was at stake.

Douglas bore early testimony to Lincoln's honesty and to his unrivaled ability. When the awkward, untrained and inexperienced president appeared in Washington, Mr. and Mrs. Douglas did more than all others to smooth the rough places and secure for him due recognition. During the early critical months of the administration Lincoln relied upon

Douglas as upon a trusted friend and counselor. The devoted labors of this friend continued, increasing in fervor and efficiency, until the vital forces failed and death ensued. Douglas was as truly and as literally a martyr to the cause of the Union as was Lincoln.

In the preliminary work of extending and strengthening the Union, it was Douglas that bore the burden and heat of the day. When the young Vermonter went West, in 1833, we had no assured foothold on the Pacific coast; but he soon became possessed of the conviction that it was the right and the duty of the United States to occupy and develop the entire breadth of the continent, from sea to sea. He believed that our institutions, combining as they do local autonomy with national control, are fitted to embrace a continent under one beneficent government. As a national legislator, he opposed the treaty fixing the northwest boundary, because, in his view, it involved a surrender of territory. He likewise opposed a clause in a treaty with Mexico, which seemed to preclude our further acquisition of territory. On questions of this sort he was always ready to act alone, regardless of party support. His wide knowledge of the West and his deep interest in that section of the country secured for him the chairmanship of the committee on territories during nearly the whole of his congressional career. As chairman of this committee in one house, he was able, much of the time, to control the corresponding committee of the other house.

For ten years before Douglas introduced his hapless Kansas bill, he had been incessant in his efforts to extort from an unwilling congress much needed legislation for the territories. His relation to the Kansas affairs cannot be rightly understood until it is studied from the point of view of the ten year's previous history. In such matters he had been accustomed to act upon his own responsibility, with little regard for the opinions of others. Though a candidate for the presidency, he was no weathercock. No candidate was ever more explicit in refusing to accept the office save upon his own terms. By relentlessly following out his own policy in respect to Kansas he incurred the opposition of his own constituents and gave mortal offense to the entire antislavery North. Then, a little later he took the field as the most effective leader of the antislavery forces against the Buchanan administration.

On the one question of extending and strengthening the union of the states Douglas took no account of consequences to himself. Many years before he had secured the enmity of the antislavery North, and he had also won the displeasure of the extreme proslavery South. He charged upon the radical South the responsibility for northern abolitionism, and

he gave the South timely warning of impending danger. When an eastern congressman in opposing the bill for a territorial government for Oregon, suggested that the people of the Northwest ought to be encouraged to form an independent republic, Douglas administered a scathing rebuke. At no time would he tolerate the slightest hint of the separation of any territory from the Union.

If we are to continue to use the name, Abraham Lincoln, as personating the whole period of the struggle for the Union, then, for the long years of Lincoln's obscurity we must fill out the life by the deeds of men more active. For this part of the life of Lincoln Mr. Johnson's book furnishes material. From it we may get a more illuminating view of the ideal saviour of the Union than has thus far been written. Douglas did for the Union what the ideal Lincoln would have done had he possessed the same temperament, the same intellectual qualities and the same opportunities.

JESSE MACY.

Life and Public Services of William Pitt Fessenden. By his son GENERAL FRANCIS FESSENDEN. (Houghton, Mifflin and Company. In two volumes.)

William Pitt Fessenden was born in 1806 and died in 1869. At the age of twenty-four he was elected as a republican to the Maine legislature. In 1840 he was elected by the whigs to the lower house of congress. His first experience in congress was during the trying years when the man who had been made president through whig votes incurred their bitter opposition. Fessenden became much disgusted with politics and for the next twelve years he devoted himself to the practice of law. In the meantime, however, he served another term in the State legislature, took an active part as a campaign speaker, and was an unsuccessful candidate for congress in 1850. When Stephen A. Douglas introduced his Kansas-Nebraska bill, in 1854, Mr. Fessenden was chosen by the free soilers to the United States senate. From this time to the day of his death his public official duties were continuous and exacting. He was a senator all of the time, save a few months during 1864 and 1865 when he was secretary of the treasury.

Mr. Fessenden's life covers a period of rapid political change and readjustment. In 1831 he was a republican. A few years later his party had taken the name of whig. After 1852 Mr. Fessenden united with those who repudiated the whig name and organization and for a few months